

On the 17th of June we made a trip to the southeast end of the lake per boat. Here enormous Bald Cypresses, with *Telansia* draped arms stand as outposts in the lake, some distance from the shore. These trees are "old timers." A few stumps—tell-tales of human vandalism—measured as much as eight feet in diameter. Most of these guarding sentinels of the Sombre Lake are hollow, mere hulls, and these natural chimneys furnish a safe retreat to the bat and a nesting site to our swifts.

We examined all the trees in this end of the lake and found six nests, three of which contained eggs, two young, and one was inaccessible. Two nests contained four eggs each and one five. The other two contained three and four young respectively. Three were about twelve feet from the water, one about fifteen, and one twenty-five.

One of the trees seemed to be especially favored by the swifts, as we noticed at least half a dozen entering it,—but we were unable to examine it thoroughly, as it was impossible for us to ascend it—its outside and inside diameter being too great.

Here, then, we have a small group of birds, isolated from civilization and consequently not subjected to the changed environment of their semi-domesticated brethren. Let us hope that they will flourish in this isolated spot in order that we may be able, in the years to come, to note what changes, if any, civilized man has unwittingly produced among our swifts.

PAUL BARTSCH, *Washington, D. C.*

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## A MARCH HORIZON.

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Events repeat themselves. Little did the writer think, when he spent March 12, 1898, with the birds, that March 11, 1899, would find him again in the field, traversing the same territory, bent upon breaking the previous year's record. An account of the 1898 trip will be found on page 21 of BULLETIN 19, to which the reader should turn for a comparison of the one about to be described.

The weather conditions in 1898 were, on the whole, rather more favorable for migratory movements than the present year. In 1899 a marked cold wave on the 8th followed the largest fall of snow of the year two days earlier, but it was followed by rapidly moderating weather which reached a temperature of 50° on the morning of the 11th, reaching during the day 63°. Clouds obscured the sun nearly all day, but no rain

fell, and a brisk south wind blew continuously. In the morning, at the six o'clock start, the ground was well covered with snow, the drifts being several feet deep in favorable places. Before the sun reached the western horizon there was no snow to be seen. Hence, the streams were rushing torrents and the fields soaking wet or covered with water. The southing wind and rushing water made sight the only sense to be depended upon. The walking was heavy!

Before a mile of the journey was behind me the records had reached fourteen—and the indispensable lead-pencil had been forgotten! However, a farmer's wife graciously supplied the want and I went on my way rejoicing. After passing through a wood in which nearly all the woods birds were recorded, it became evident that the fields or open country would yield larger results than the woods, except the evergreen thicket in the gorge of Chance Creek. But detail is wearisome, let me turn rather to the general results.

The early morning hours witnessed large numbers of migrating Crows, Bronzed Grackles and Bluebirds. During the last three hours of the afternoon the Crows were continuously passing eastward and the Bronzed Grackles, Rusty and Redwinged Blackbirds westward. There were thousands of each species. Near Lake Erie and on its shore, *flocks* of Bluebirds were moving westward, or resting in the woods. Some attempt was made to count the Bluebirds, but the number reached five hundred before two o'clock, and after that time flocks were in sight almost continuously, so the attempt was abandoned. Restless flocks of ducks, mostly Pintails, vacillated between the icy lake and the shallow field ponds.

During the day forty-one species were recorded, thus breaking the previous year's record. For the sake of comparison the list of species is here given. C indicates that the species was common, A that it was abundant.

American Herring Gull. 1.	Sharp-shinned Hawk. 1.
Mallard. 6.	Red-tailed Hawk. C.
Pintail. C.	Red-shouldered Hawk. C.
American Golden-eye. 1.	Broad-winged Hawk. 1.
Killdeer. C.	Am. Rough-legged Hawk. 2.
Bob-white. 1.	Am. Sparrow Hawk. 2.
Ruffed Grouse. 1.	Barred Owl. 1.
Mourning Dove. 2.	Hairy Woodpecker. C.
Marsh Hawk. 1.	Downy Woodpecker. C.

Red-headed Woodpecker. C.	Junco. C.
Red-bellied Woodpecker. C.	Song Sparrow. C.
Flicker, C.	Cardinal. C.
Prairie Horned Lark. C.	Towhee. 3.
Crow. A.	Northern Shrike, 2.
Blue Jay. C.	Brown Creeper. 1.
Cowbird. C.	White-breasted Nuthatch. C.
Meadowlark. C.	Tufted Titmouse. C.
Red-winged Blackbird. A.	Chickadee. C.
Rusty Blackbird. C.	Robin. C.
Bronzed Grackle. A.	Bluebird. C.
Tree Sparrow. C.	Total 41.

Thus it will be seen that of the forty species recorded on March 12, 1898, nine were not recorded on March 11, 1899, while ten were recorded in 1899 which were not recorded in 1898.

LYNDS JONES, *Oberlin, Ohio.*

## A SUGGESTION TO OOLOGISTS.

Before we enter upon another active campaign of bird nesting, it is fitting that we should pause a moment to reflect upon the true aim of our toil, risks and trouble, as well as delight and recreation. How many of us can define the phrase "Collecting for scientific purposes," which, like liberty, is the excuse for many crimes?

If it is true, as has been asserted, that oology as a scientific study has been a disappointment, I am convinced that it is not on account of its limited possibilities, but simply because the average oologist devotes so much time to the collection and bartering of specimens' that no time is left for the actual study of the accumulating shells. In other words, he frequently undertakes a journey without aim or object.

The oologist has done much toward clearing up the life history of many of our birds, but as observations of this nature can often be accomplished without the breaking up of the home of the parent bird, it alone will not suffice as an excuse for indiscriminate collecting. After preparing the specimen for the cabinet his responsibility does not end but only begins. A failure to add something to the general knowledge is robbing the public as well as the birds. He who talks fluently of the enforcement of strict laws for the preservation of our wild birds, their nests and eggs,